

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSC-05 PM-05 SP-02 INR-10 CIAE-00
NSAE-00 DODE-00 EB-08 ICA-11 /053 W
-----005807 022250Z /75 L

R 020930Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3772
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY SANA

S E C R E T DOHA 857

ABU DHABI PASS DUBAI

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, QA
SUBJECT: AMIR OF QATAR APPREHENSIVE OVER MIDDLE EAST
DEVELOPMENTS: URGES INCREASED AMERICAN EFFORTS FOR PEACE

REF: DOHA 609

1. SUMMARY. THE AMIR OF QATAR IS ALARMED OVER RECENT AREA DEVELOPMENTS, ESPECIALLY IN THE TWO YEMENS. HE URGES HEIGHTENED AMERICAN EFFORTS TO SETTLE THE ARAB-ISRAEL DISPUTE, THE CONTINUATION OF WHICH INCREASES, IN HIS VIEW, THE APPEAL OF RADICALISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING MY JUNE 29 FAREWELL CALL ON AMIR KHALIFA BIN HAMAD AL-THNI BEFORE DEPARTING ON HOME LEAVE, THE AMIR MADE A PASSIONATE CALL FOR THE UNITED STATES TO INTENSIFY AND INCREASE THE TEMPO OF ITS EFFORTS TO SETTLE THE ARAB-ISRAEL DISPUTE.

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TIMING WAS BECOMING OF THE ESSENCE; SADAT'S MIDDLE EASTERN PEACE INITIATIVE WAS NEAR FAILURE; AND RADICAL FORCES BACKED BY THE SOVIET UNION WERE INCREASING THEIR SUBVERSIVE EFFORTS. THE UNITED STATES WAS NOT DOING ENOUGH TO ARREST THESE TRENDS.

3. AMIR KHALIFA CONTINUED THAT THE RECENT CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT

IN AFGHANISTAN WAS ITSELF WORRISOME. BUT THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT GHASHMI IN NORTH YEMEN AND THE SUBSEQUENT KILLING OF PRESIDENT SALIM RUBAY'I ALI IN SOUTH YEMEN WERE EXTREMELY DISTURBING TO HIMSELF, OTHER GULF LEADERS, AND ESPECIALLY TO SAUDI ARABIA. THE AMIR REVEALED IN CONFIDENCE THAT SAUDI INTELLIGENCE CHIEF FAISAL BIN TURKI HAD SECRETLY VISITED DOHA THE PREVIOUS EVENING IN THE COURSE OF A VISIT TO ALL THE GULF LEADERS. BIN TURKI HAD TALKED TO THE AMIR MAINLY ABOUT THE TWO YEMENS AND THE POTENTIAL THREAT TO ARABIAN PENINSULA SECURITY POSED BY DEVELOPMENTS THERE.

4. KHALIFA SAID HE HAD RECEIVED A GOOD INTELLIGENCE REPORT, WHETHER FROM FAISAL BIN TURKI WAS NOT CLEAR, THAT 200 ASSASSINS (IN ARABIC, "PROFESSORS OF KILLING") HAD JUST RETURNED TO ADEN AFTER TRAINING IN THE SOVIET UNION. THESE PEOPLE WERE NOW SAID TO BE TRAINING OTHERS IN TECHNIQUES OF ASSASSINATION. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN, AMIR KHALIFA ASKED, IF THESE PEOPLE STARTED ASSASSINATING AREA LEADERS? WHAT IF THEY KILLED THE SHAH OR SADAT? WHAT IF THEY STARTED INFILTRATING NORTH YEMEN AND STARTED A CAMPAIGN OF SUBVERSION THERE? WHAT WOULD THE UNITED STATES DO? WOULD THE UNITED STATES LET THE RUSSIANS GET BY WITH ANYTHING THEY WANTED TO TRY IN THE MIDDLE EAST? THE UNITED STATES SHOULD KNOW, THE AMIR SAID, THAT ANYTHING THE UNITED STATES DID TO STOP THE SPREAD OF LEFTIST SUBVERSION IN THE MIDDLE EAST WOULD BE SUPPORTED NOT ONLY BY SAUDI ARABIA, EGYPT AND THE GULF STATES, BUT EVEN BY SYRIA AND IRAQ. THE LATTER COUNTRIES MAINTAINED TIES WITH THE
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SOVIET UNION FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSES BUT THEY TOO WERE UNEASY ABOUT SOVIET EFFORTS TO SPREAD ITS INFLUENCE IN THE ARAB WORLD.

5. AMIR KHALIFA SAID THERE WAS A CONNECTION--WITH WHICH I AGREED-- BETWEEN CONTINUED UNREST AND SUBVERSION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE FAILURE TO FIND A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT TO THE ARAB-ISRAEL DISPUTE. THE RESPONSIBILITY TO FIND A SOLUTION LIES MORE AND MORE HEAVILY ON THE UNITED STATES. KHALIFA REALIZED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD ALREADY DONE A LOT, BUT NOT NEARLY ENOUGH TO MAKE THE ISRAELIS UNDERSTAND THAT THEY COULD NOT CONTINUE TO HOLD ON TO THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. PRESIDENT SADAT WAS UNDER HEAVY ATTACK. HE WAS BEING RIDICULED AS A FAILURE. THERE WAS A QUESTION OF HOW LONG HE COULD HOLD OUT POLITICALLY. THERE WAS ALSO A QUESTION OF SADAT'S HEALTH. THE UNITED STATES SIMPLY HAD TO PUSH HARDER AND FASTER TO GET PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. OTHERWISE, KHALIFA SAID, THE FORCES OF LEFTIST RADICALISM WOULD TRIUMPH IN THE AREA.

6. COMMENT: AS INDICATED IN REFTTEL, AMIR KHALIFA HAS MANY FEARS. HE RECOGNIZES THAT QATAR IS A RELATIVELY FRAGILE POLITICAL ENTITY. WHAT HAPPENS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND PARTICULARLY IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA, IS OF INTENSE CONCERN TO HIM. THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN SANA AND ADEN HAVE STIRRED HIS DEEPEST FEARS.

HE SEES ONLY ONE BASIC WAY TO REVERSE THE PRESENT TIDE, AND THAT
IS FOR THE UNITED STATES TO PRESS EVER HARDER FOR AN OVERALL
MIDDLE EASTERN PEACE. WHILE KHALIFA'S FEARS MAY BE EXAGGERATED,
HIS ESSENTIAL ANALYSIS SEEMS NOT UNSOUND.
KILLGORE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DOHA00857
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780273-0732
Format: TEL
From: DOHA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197807102/aaaadhwf.tel
Line Count: 121
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 93754a6b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 DOHA 609
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1852026
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMIR OF QATAR APPREHENSIVE OVER MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS: URGES INCREASED AMERICAN EFFORTS FOR PEACE
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PDEV, QA, US, XF, (AL-THANI, KHALIFA BIN HAMAD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/93754a6b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014